

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

June 25, 2013

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on June 25, 2013, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Committee Chairman, Dale Venturini, Jim Bennett, Jeff Hirsh and Paul MacDonald.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; John McGinn, Tim Muldoon, Breana Quinn, Amanda Wilmouth, Diane Richard and Arlene Oliva, RICC; Kristin McGrath, Martha Sheridan and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Daniel Schwartz, VETS; Cheryl Cohen, Larry Lepore and Beth Johnson, DDC; Amber Ilcisko, Assistant to Jim Bennett; Paul Grimaaldi, PROJO and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. Due to the lack of a quorum Ms. Venturini delayed seeking approval of the April minutes until such time as more Commissioners arrived.

Ms. Venturini announced that the next Marketing Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on July 23rd. She suggested and the

Committee agreed that Committee meetings would be canceled for the month of July.

Mr. Bennett arrived at 12:40.

Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Bennett and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the April meeting

PWCVB

Ms. Venturini recognized Kristin McGrath who began the CVB's Power Point Presentation. Ms. McGrath's presentation is attached. Ms. McGrath reported that hotel occupancy continues to be up to last year as well as a higher average daily rate. She stated that Convention Center related definite room nights are higher than last year and the associated room nights far exceed last year. Ms. McGrath stated that she was pleased with the progress that is being made. Ms. McGrath noted that tentative bookings and room nights are ahead of pace. Ms. McGrath noted that definite bookings include the Follet Software Aspen Institute, JamFest Events, Handweavers Guild of America, International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans and the National Council on Teacher Retirement. Ms. McGrath stated that the Handweavers Guild of America took 28 months of

negotiations to book and the National Council on Teacher Retirement was an ambassador referral. Tentative bookings and prospective groups are the Caterpillar Dealer Marketing Association, the Council of Education Facility Planners, Northeast Retail Lumber Association, Hanley Wood, the Council for Advancement & Support of Education and the American Studies Association. Ms. McGrath reported that the CVB traveled to Chicago where they hosted 13 clients for dinner, attended a tradeshow and met with prospective event planners. She also noted that sales calls were made in Milwaukee. Ms. McGrath stated that the CVB attended a PCMA Foundation Dinner, the Springtime Expo and the MPI Northeast Education Conference.

Ms. Adamo reported on the month's marketing and communications efforts. She reported that the marketing team has been working on media relations for the Indian event BMM. Ms. Adamo stated that a great deal of effort is being put into sensitivity training for the Phoenix Society for Burn Victims. Ms. Adamo reported that the team is utilizing marketing resources on several RI Sport Council bids and conducting a social media audit that will include strategies to entice meeting and convention planners. Ms. Adamo said that the CVB had hosted a customer service training session for CVB members in conjunction with the RI Hospitality Association.

DUNKIN' DOUNTS CENTER

Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center's FY

13 goals and the progress being made toward reaching their goals. Ms. Cohen stated that the Dunkin' Donuts Center's marketing efforts have been successful and all media objectives have been exceeded. Ms. Cohen reported that earned media results for the year reached \$641,211.23. She also noted that print media and Google alerts resulted in 5,313 articles. Ms. Cohen reported that she has been marketing July and August events. For WWE Smackdown a media and promotional campaign is running and a PR plan is being finalized. American Idol is also being promoted through social media campaigns and group sales efforts are underway. Ms. Cohen reported that Fall events are Disney on Ice in September, Barstool Foam Party also in September and Jeff Dunham.

Mr. Lepore informed the Committee that Providence College would like permission to brand the corridor outside their locker room. Discussion ensued regarding how it could be accomplished without affecting other events in the building. Mr. Bennett noted that the building is managed by SMG and this should be their decision. Mr. Lepore responded that it is our issue to negotiate with PC and look at options for the space.

Mr. Lepore informed the Committee that Aaron Hernandez was involved in an incident at the Dunk in December when he was asked to leave the facility. Mr. Lepore said that he has not been asked about the incident but wanted the Commissioners to be aware in the event that the press got hold of the story.

CONVENTION CENTER

Mr. McGinn was asked to present the report for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn stated that the revenue goal for the year is \$9 million and that currently we are at \$8,500 million. Mr. McGinn said that the goal would not be reached. Mr. McGinn said that tentative events for May through June, 2013 include Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation Biennial Conference, the Rhode Island Foundation and the US Finals. Mr. McGinn reported that contracted events include Citizens Financial Group, Fidelity Investment Sales Meeting and RISD Graduation. Mr. McGinn reported that numerous site tours recently took place. Mr. Muldoon noted that New England Tech has agreed to hold their graduation at the Convention Center. Ms. Venturini asked why you think you will make 9 million next year when you didn't make it this year. Mr. Muldoon stated that the economy is a little better and that we have more booked events than we had at the same time last year including the Paula Abdul Cheerleading and Dance competition.

VETS

Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Schwartz to report on events at the VETS. Mr. Schwartz presented the period highlights and noted that the Philharmonic and Festival Ballet have increased attendance. Mr. Schwartz reported that the number of event days is up for the period

for the period and last year. Attendance for events also increased for the year although attendance was lower in May because of the construction. Mr. Schwartz was pleased to report that the Festival Ballet had a successful season and has repaid the amount owed to us. Mr. Hirsh stated that he was pleased that the Ballet was doing well and asked what they were doing to turn the season around. Mr. Schwartz said that they are still struggling but have downsized and are choosing better titles. Mr. Schwartz reported that Disney Live is doing very well at the box office. He said that consideration is being given to adding a 6th performance. Mr. Schwartz stated that FELD is managing the marketing campaign. Mr. Schwartz presented an event update for FY 14 and reported on pending offers.

RICCA

Ms. Keough distributed a report explaining the need to upgrade the Complex web-site. Ms. Keough reported that we have had multiple problems with our current site. Mr. Hirsh stated that he understands that Exhibitor Services was not included in the current web-site design. Ms. Keough noted that inclusion of Exhibitor Services would have put the project over budget. She stated that our site is inefficient. Discussions ensued regarding the three firms that submitted bids. Ms. Keough noted that the marketing team had interviewed and checked references of the three firms that submitted bids. Ms. Keough said that the firm that most met their need is Carbon House. Ms. Keough asked that the Committee recommend to

the Board awarding the contract to Carbon House. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Bennett it was unanimously

VOTED: to recommend Carbon House to upgrade and make improvements to our web-site.

Mr. MacDonald stated that he is always disappointed when a local vendor is not chosen but he agreed that Carbon House appears to be the logical choice. Ms. Venturini said that Mr. MacDonald's point is well taken but we went with local the last time and have been disappointed.

Ms. Venturini reported that the PWCVB contract is up for renewal and that she would like to see an increase in the amount that we contribute. Ms. Venturini stated that they have been receiving the same amount since 1996 although we have added the Dunk and the VETS. Mr. McCarvill brought to the Committee's attention new duties that we have inserted into the contract. Discussion ensued regarding the CVB contract. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Bennett and seconded by Mr. MacDonald it was unanimously

VOTED: to recommend an increase in the amount that we contribute to the PWCVB.

Mr. Bennett announced that the Governor had re-appointed Jeff Hirsh

and George Nee to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Bennett also announced that he was naming Paul MacDonald Chairman of the Dunkin' Donuts Committee.

Ms. Venturini asked if there was any further business. Hearing none she looked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. MacDonald it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:48 PM